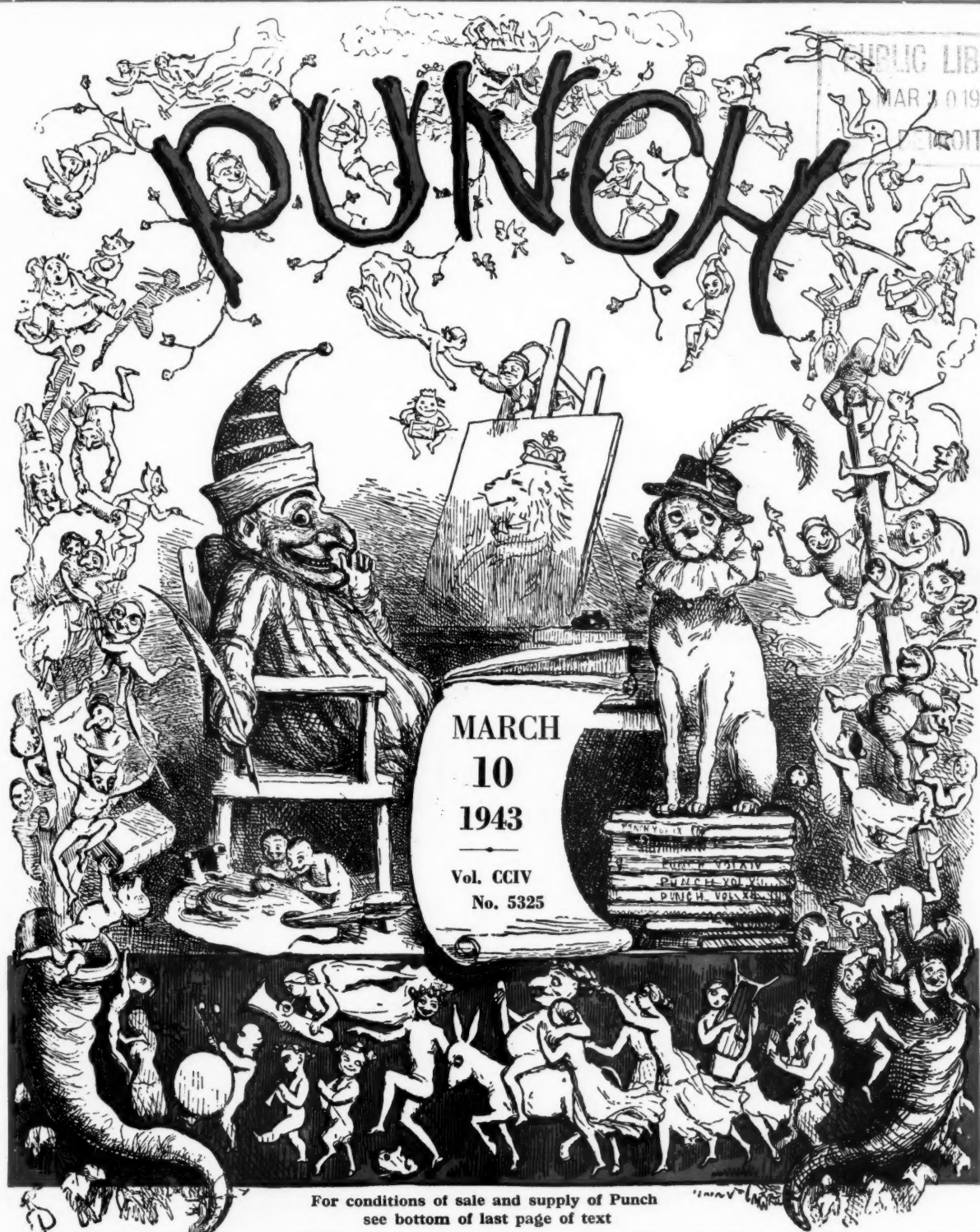


Treasure Those Tyres
AND SAVE RUBBER FOR VICTORY



DUNLOP



MARCH
10
1943

Vol. CCIV
No. 5325

For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text

"Triplex"—the safety glass
Regd.



"Ooh!.. it's
boo-ful
Mummy!

For Rosy Cheeks and Robust Health

THE value of 'Ovaltine' as the daily beverage for children is borne out in the following letter received by the proprietors of 'Ovaltine':

"My little son, just 4, has had 'Ovaltine' since 12 months old. He is now 3 ft. 7 ins. in height, weighs 3 st. 5 lbs., and has the loveliest rosy cheeks you could imagine. In buses, in shops and in the street people say to me, 'What a lovely child . . . how on earth do you get him to look like that in war-time? What do you feed him on?' I answer, 'Rations, but he always has 'Ovaltine' every day.'"

When 'Ovaltine' supplements the child's dietary you can be sure that it provides the nutritive elements most needed to form firm flesh, strong bones and to create ample reserves of energy. Moreover, 'Ovaltine' will strengthen the child's resistance to coughs, colds and other infections.

'Ovaltine' also has the advantage of being very economical and easily prepared. As it is naturally sweet there is no need to add sugar.

Drink delicious

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P605A

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The quality of his mind is revealed to us by his opinions and observations.

It may be only a phrase he employs or a gesture but these certainly are the bases upon which we form our values concerning him.

The quality of mind of those in executive control of a business is shown by the policy and aims of the firm. The achievements indicate the excellence of workmanship and the standard of skill possessed by the craftsmen employed.

Comfort of mind can be given only by work of quality, for it is the one foundation upon which the great businesses of the world have been built.

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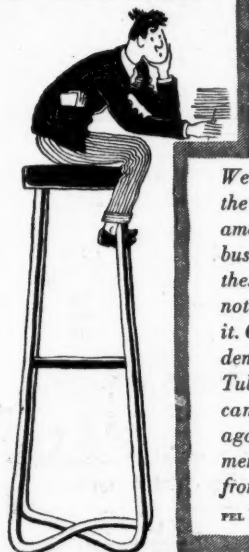
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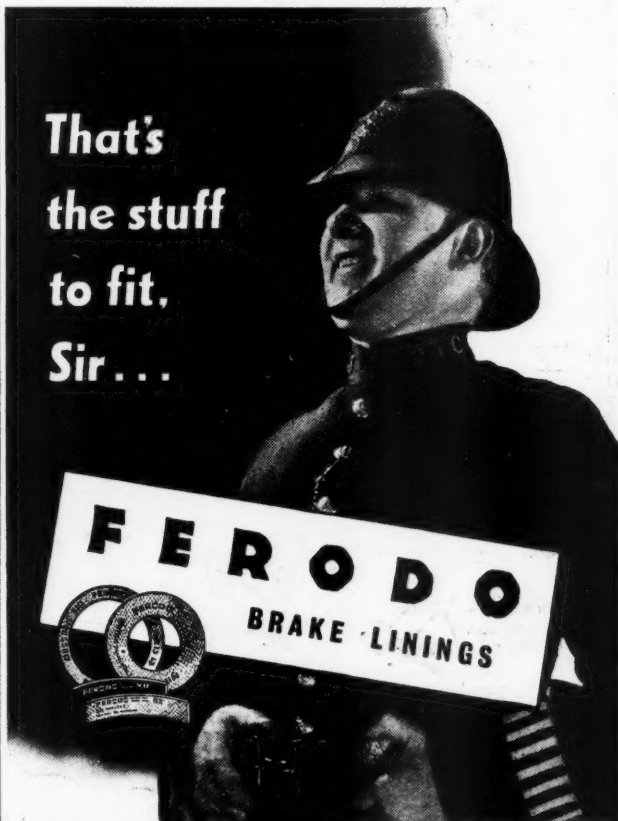


OLD ANGUS

A NOBLE SCOTCH
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the stuff
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Sir...



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SHOES and the War Effort

'MAKE DO,' says the Government, 'make everything you have last longer.' Well, here's a tip about shoes. Meltonian Cream (because it is a cream) seeps deep into the leather, feeding and preserving it. It keeps leather supple and prevents premature cracking which is caused by allowing leather to become dry and hard. And remember—a little cream goes a long way. Just a smear with a clean rag and up comes a brilliant shine. Particularly important in these days of strictly limited supplies!

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'S ANATOGEN'

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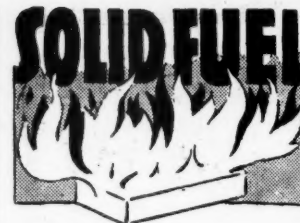


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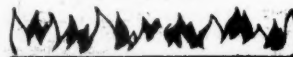
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to flavour it*



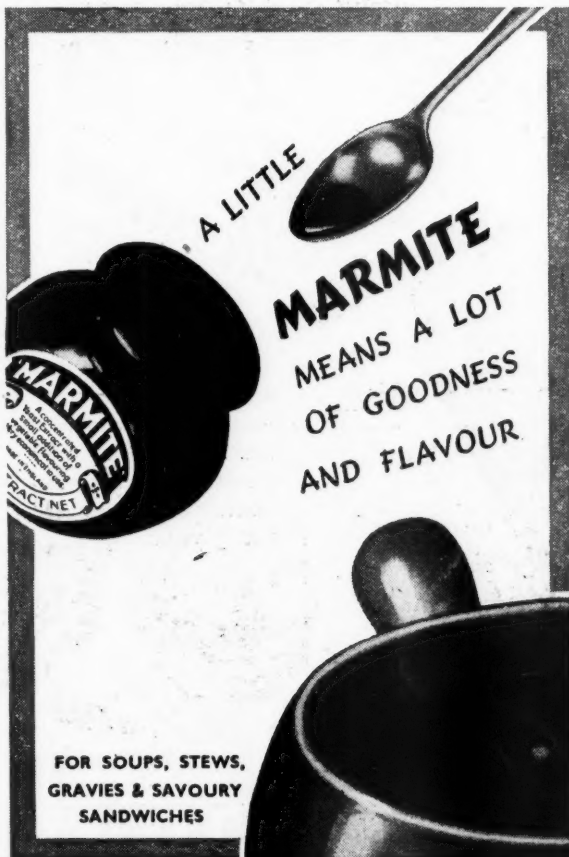
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THE GEORGE CROSS ISLE

As a tribute to Malta's undying heroism will you help to endow an Empire Memorial Ward in a Malta Hospital?

Malta, the 'George Cross' Isle, the Empire outpost that has faced and survived thousands of Air Attacks, the very incarnation of the Courage that has turned the tide towards Allied Victory—what worthier gesture of our admiration and gratitude than to endow a Malta Hospital with a Memorial Ward!

HELP WITH YOUR GIFTS

of old jewellery, gold and silver, etc., articles, unwanted 'treasures' which will be gratefully received and turned to good account.

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MP/QF



PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCIV No. 5325

March 10 1943

Charivaria

"It is now realized," says a Berlin military commentator, "that mass air-raids do no good." This is corroborated by R.A.F. aerial photographs of Germany.

"Detectives at Wedding Reception," says a heading. Among those presents.



"Hitler is gradually ridding himself of generals of the old Prussian hierarchy," says a writer. Von by von.

"I prophesy that Sir Archibald Sinclair will not resign despite this mass (if that is the right word) desertion of his fololwers."

Evening Standard.

If that is the right word.

"Bridesmaids Accidentally Drenched by Hose," says a heading. The wedding belles were wringing.

A retired Denver restaurant keeper who has never drunk intoxicants, smoked or been to the theatre, has just celebrated his 110th birthday. How?

South Sea Island savages use shells for money. It is just the reverse in civilized communities.

Height is a great advantage in a stage career, we are told. We see no reason why a very tall actor should not play *all* of a pantomime horse.



"Selon la tradition familiale, Winston Churchill entra à Harrow, qui est le troisième collége anglaise après Oxford et Cambridge."—*North African Paper.*

Harrow should now be moved to Bletchley Junction.

A man complained to a magistrate that his wife left him entirely without reason. Perhaps that is how she found him.

"The skill of the modern dentist is amazing," says a doctor. Even his patients gaze at him open-mouthed.

"How near to Goebbels have our bombs dropped?" asks a reader in an evening paper. Too, he would probably say.

A politician says he talks as he thinks. But does he think as he talks?

Women with the softest voices, it is said, hail from the north of Scotland. No wonder they sound soft.

A play described by the critics as being very sad has been withdrawn. Apparently not enough playgoers were in tiers.



It was stated in court that a man had been ejected three times from a night club and returned each time by another entrance. Evidently the commissionaire had put too much spin on him.

A Whitehall official has his dispatch-case containing important documents chained to his wrist. So all he has to guard against is leaving himself in a taxi.

Return from Italy

THE last red stream went by; the bits of roof
Fell back like frightened crows. Alone, aloof,
An aircraft hung in flames before it dropped
And, flare-like, yet the other flares outtopped
In brilliance. Climbing we circled up
And from the Adriatic like a cup
Of rose-red liquid the three-quarter moon
Climbed paling at our wing-tip, and too soon
Outmatched our height and showed us like a fly
Crawling the surface cloud laboriously
From which rose up and pointed our way to go
The Alps' proud summits in their caps of snow.

Fountain-Pens

I WONDER if my readers know when fountain-pens were invented? I don't either, and I can't see that it matters in the least. All that most of us know is that in the old days—that is, when people wore fancy dress—there were no fountain-pens, only goose-quills. It was all dreadfully primitive, but only to be expected. All that matters to us is that fountain-pens *have* been invented and are not likely to have to be invented again; a thought which should comfort all those who have lost theirs and are wondering if they will ever get another. But even those who have no fountain-pen may be interested in what I am going to say, because I propose to ignore the temporary effect of the war on the fountain-pen's place in the social structure and to see it as it really is, as the friend of man.

A fountain-pen can cost anything from one-and-six to anything. I doubt if anyone has heard of a fountain-pen which cost less than one-and-six. Indeed, if there were such a fountain-pen, everyone would hear of it, because the publicity-value scale of a fountain-pen seems to go up as its money value goes down, so that it is impossible to pick up a one-and-sixpenny pen without its owner pointing out, almost truculently, that it only cost one-and-six; whereas you never hear the owner of an expensive pen so much as mention that it cost five guineas. Psychologists, at it again, have worried out two explanations: one, that we all have in us a dimly-remembered precept that a fountain-pen costs at least a guinea, and that by so cheating as to pay one-and-sixpence we can only put ourselves right with the world by owning up every now and then. Other psychologists say precepts their feet, everyone knows a one-and-sixpenny fountain-pen is not worth stealing. This last explanation is an example of how even the best psychologists can ignore the facts, because everyone knows that a one-and-sixpenny fountain-pen is like a three-and-elevenpenny alarm clock; if it works enough to be used at all it works so well as to become a legend.

How does a fountain-pen work, if at all? Well, even if not at all, it has a simple mechanism for getting the ink *inside* the pen, and an even simpler one—often no more than the law of gravity—for getting it *out*, but I will come to that later. The filling process begins in the shop itself, when the owner-to-be asks the shopman how it fills, adding oh, yes, like that, doesn't it. This is how fountain-pen buyers talk. They know perfectly well that you can only fill a fountain-pen by working a lever or pressing a button,

but they are afflicted with a temporary *bonhomie* which drives them to prolong the buying till their subconscious tells them they have had their money's-worth of attention. This is not entirely their fault; the shopman began it by asking for their autograph.

After the shopkeeper has filled the pen, it should be easy to go on writing until it is empty and then fill it up again. The trouble is that it is too easy, and therefore dull. For the first week of a fountain-pen, owners are unable to see an ink-bottle without emptying their pen and filling it not once but several times, affording philosophers yet another proof that the world can never be completely mechanized as long as there are people in it. For about the next three months fountain-pen owners sober up gradually, reaching their ultimate stage of never filling the pen at all. After eighteen months the fountain-pen itself takes the upper hand, reaching its ultimate stage, which means filling it by turning the pen upside-down and pouring the ink in at the back of the nib, and seeing it come out through the lever.

Now for how the ink comes out of a fountain-pen, I mean by the nib. The fact that a simple thing like ink can come out of a fountain-pen in so many totally different ways has led scientists to surmise that different people have different effects on their fountain-pens, and their researches may be summed up thus. People who squeeze tooth-paste tubes from the bottom upwards (instead of, as is more usual, from the middle sideways) have little trouble with their fountain-pens, the ink of which flows freely and evenly, but, it is nice to think, to small purpose. People who feel life has frustrated them are apt to write on the back or side of the nib, hoping that all the other people who write on the front of the nib will notice. Little do such people realize that they would have much more chance of publicity if they wrote on the *front*, thereby impressing all the dull normal people who write on the backs and sides of their nibs. Fountain-pen makers, however, knowing human nature, have almost from the beginning made fountain-pens with nibs which can only be used backwards or sideways, so that this is not likely to happen.

Certain people, you will have observed, shake their fountain-pens on to the carpet. Superficially we could dismiss these people as publicity-mongers, but really they are the opposite. They are hoping not to be noticed. (We can prove this for ourselves by shaking *our* fountain-pen on the carpet and gauging our own reactions.) Psychologists say that these people can get nearer than any others to being geniuses without doing anything else to prove it.

People who find the ink running down the nib into a globular blot are yet another type. They are not necessarily frustrated or geniuses. They are just unlucky. They always are. They have learnt to tip the ink back into the nib, blot the blot with the sharp corner of the blotting-paper and go on again a bit to the right of the blot; while people who do not write so much as etch, scratching the words in first and going back to fill them up with ink-powder, are not necessarily unlucky but were relying on filling their pens at the post office.

Quis custodiet . . . ?

WHEN everything is all controlled—

From mugs to meat, from beer to bowlers—
Who will retrieve the pass we've sold?

Who will control us the controllers?



TEAM WORK



"We seem to be muddling through much more scientifically now than at the beginning of the war."

Football

IT takes a good deal to upset what may be called the morale of Lieutenant Simpson, but he was certainly shaken when the Major instructed him to referee the final of the inter-section football competition, between Section Six (Sergeant Ngunua) and Section Twelve (Sergeant Sawama).

"Surely," said Major Fibbing, "you have refereed a football match before?"

Simpson had to admit that he had. "But that was in England," he pointed out. "It is the language difficulty that perturbs me. I can't possibly referee a football match in Swahili."

"Most of the necessary words are the same in Swahili as in English," said the Major, who particularly did not want to referee the match himself, having been crushed between Sergeant Gawama and Private Kufungo, both

charging at the same time, in the semi-final.

Simpson could see that the Major was in one of his adamant moods, so he just gave him a cold look and retired to his tent to think the matter over.

"I must have an interpreter," he decided at last. "Bomba must follow me like a faithful shadow over the field, and then if I have to explain anything to the combatants he will be at hand."

Bomba, who is a tall thin man with a distaste for exercise of any sort, did not seem keen on acting as assistant referee. He said that he was supposed to be teaching English to Corporal Sirakasi and Lance-Corporal Chupa at the time of the match, but Simpson said that Sirakasi and Chupa could act as linesmen.

At the appointed hour both teams turned up, and Simpson was surprised to see that they wore neither shirts nor boots, and looked very much more savage than they do when properly dressed. In uniform the Walongas have rather a sedate, church-going appearance, but dressed (or rather undressed) for football they looked like part of one of those Cecil B. de Mille films of the old silent days when the cannibals descended in force on the bungalow where the white girl with the amazingly permanent wave in her hair stood guard alone over her decrepit grandfather.

"I have a firimbi," said Bomba with a wide grin.

"Splendid!" said Simpson, not having the slightest idea what a firimbi was. It turned out to be a whistle, and Bomba began blowing it

lustily almost as soon as the game started, giving somebody offside that Symphon had decided, in the interests of simplicity, not to notice.

"I have my own whistle," said Symphon, annoyed, "and I will do any blowing that is required. Your job is simply to keep near me so that I can use you if any explaining is necessary."

Bomba seemed very hurt about this. He was proud of his whistle. So Symphon had to compromise by saying that he did not mind Bomba giving an occasional pheeep if he noticed anything that Symphon had happened to miss.

Unfortunately, while Symphon and Bomba had been discussing the whistle situation a goal had been scored at the other end of the field by Six Section, which Twelve Section insisted was not a goal at all, Private Utafisha son of Magulobo having been offside when he kicked the ball.

After a long and more or less incomprehensible discussion with the linesmen Symphon allowed the goal, and from then on the match assumed a grimmer character. Spectators leaped high in the air and threw their hats away, others relapsed into unfathomable gloom. The play became rougher, and several men kicked other men in the face in a casual sort of way which nobody, even the victims, seemed to mind.

The second half was a nightmare to Symphon. Bomba dashed about the field like a hare, keeping close to the ball and phoeeping madly. Symphon, who inclines to embonpoint, panted perspiringly in his wake.

Twice he was knocked down by a thundering herd of footballers who came on him suddenly. He became so dazed that he could no longer distinguish one team from the other, and he gave all sorts of impossible decisions which were completely ignored by everybody.

At last, to reassert his position, he sent a man off the field for handling the ball, and he was so fierce about it that the man scuttled away like a frightened rabbit.

Only when the match was over did he discover that his victim was Bomba.

The Penny Trick

"WE are approaching," announced Nicholas, "the scene of the ancient Penny Trick."

We were strolling through the darkened streets of Lewstock, and the rustic silence of that venerable town

had evidently moved Nicholas to reminiscence.

I expressed a proper curiosity concerning the Penny Trick.

"The Penny Trick," he explained, "was a practical joke. Now," he went on quickly, "don't start being superior about the practical joke. The fashion nowadays is to despise that airy manifestation of animal spirits as something crude and callow, betraying a state of appalling mental immaturity. The modern public-school boy no doubt regards the escapades of Stalky and Co. with raised eyebrows and a sophisticated curl of the lip. And I suppose nobody now reads Saki's short stories with real sympathy. Yet, if one remembers the traditions of Madcap Hal, of Robin Goodfellow, and of—by the way, how did we manage to get on to this subject?"

"You were speaking," I reminded him, "of the Penny Trick."

"Of course. Well, it was down this very road we are coming to that I used to play the Penny Trick. You put a penny on the end of a string—"

"And then," I interposed carelessly, "I suppose you pulled it away when people tried to pick it up?"

Nicholas stopped dead and stared at me. I could not see his face in the gloom, but I was aware of the withering contempt in his glance.

"Now that," he said, "is precisely what we did *not* do! That is where you moderns show your ignorance of the forgotten art of practical joking which flourished under Queen Victoria but was perfected in the reign of Edward VII. Of course we had our ingenuous imitators. What artists have not? But to judge the craftsman by the apprentice, to mistake the acolyte for the high priest, to—"

"All right, Nicholas," I interrupted, "but what was this Penny Trick anyway?"

"The Penny Trick," he resumed patiently, "was carried out with a penny on the end of a string."

He paused with an air of challenge, but this time I refrained from solecism.

"We concealed ourselves close to the pavement—there are some railings just here which I'll show you in a minute—and then we tinkled the penny on the ground behind the passer-by."

"Oh—I see," I murmured.

"In those days," continued Nicholas, "the streets were nearly as dark as they are now. And," he added, warming to it, "there were sovereigns in circulation.

The Penny Trick was a subtle test of character. The careful man knew pretty well what was in his pocket, but could not resist looking, to make sure. There were no electric torches then, just as there are no electric batteries now, but there were plenty of matches, and the thrifty fellow who heard a coin drop simply had to use them. When he was nearly through the box, peering into his purse to see what was missing and into the gutter to see where it had rolled, someone else would come along and ask what he was looking for.

"Then there would be two of them searching up and down, because, you see, money interests everybody in one way or another."

"Presently, when they'd both run out of matches, there'd probably be a clip-clop of horses' hooves, and along would come a farmer in his gig."

"Hullo, Sam! What's the trouble then? Lost summat?"

"Dunno, Jarge. 'Eard summat drop. Maybe a 'a'penny, maybe 'arf a sov. Lend us your lamp, there's a gude feller."

"Down would come George with his gig-lamp, and the search would be resumed, reinforced shortly by a policeman, a postman, and eventually by a whole crowd of inquisitive people with nothing better to do."

"From our ambush we have watched as many as forty people, gathered in quest of an anonymous coin, and have even emerged to assist them by suggestions and so keep the interest going."

"Consider the subtlety of the jest. It played on the human instincts of greed and curiosity, on the springs of enterprise stirred by the possibilities of lost treasure. Now the modern infant, who is supposed to be so sophisticated—Great Scott! What's that?"

It was a clatter of metal on the pavement at our feet.

We looked down just in time to catch sight of a shadowy arm stretched through the railings, groping for something. Nicholas grabbed the arm, which was very small.

"Has your penny come off the string, my lad?" he asked, a wealth of sentimental benevolence in his tone.

"Penny!" piped a shrill voice. "I ain't got no pennies! I gives all me pennies to Natural Savings Sustificuts. Yeur—leave go o' me arm!"

"What have you been dropping then?"

"I dropped a pattern o' depth-charges," came the shrill voice defiantly, "and now yu'm nort but a patch of hoil on the surface, so yu'm properly straddled and sunk—see?"

And, twisting like an eel, the disturber broke free and was gone.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

Life, Law and Limbo

or Quelch on Quelch

By Mr. Justice Quelch

I DO not remember my birth. I am told by my elder brothers that I was born of poor but honest parents. What they told me is not evidence, perhaps. I merely give their statement for what it is worth. My earliest memory is of threatening to bring an action against my eldest brother for duress when he used forcible restraint upon my person. He also used undue influence in making various little contracts with me. I did not know at first that I was incapable of making a contract, being a minor, and it was some years later (though well within the Statute of Limitations) that I brought my action against him for the recovery of my catapult, marbles and woolly dog. I did not trouble to produce evidence of the undue influence; litigation within families is a sad business at best, and the fact that I was a minor was enough to win my case for me. Besides, lengthening the case with prolix and unnecessary evidence would not only have wasted the judge's time (than which no waste can be more regrettable, since judges are unfortunately not paid by piecework), but it would also have added to my taxed costs, which my brother might well have resented paying. He would have been under a legal obligation to pay them, but between brothers the Law is not everything.

After my career at school, during which I successfully sued the headmaster, my housemaster, and the matron for such torts as they saw fit to injure me with, I went up to the university, where I immediately took out writs against the warden of my college, the proctor, and my tutor. Through these and other actions I collected enough damages to enable me to study law. I was called to the Bar and at once attracted many briefs. My lot was more fortunate than that of most young barristers, for I had drawn considerable attention to myself through diligent and constant litigation. I do not assume any credit for this, or even for winning all my cases. Any man can win several actions a year if only he knows his rights and is willing to work hard and patiently. He can even provoke others into infringing his rights in the first place. Perhaps I had a keener sense of justice than most boys, that is all. At any rate it paid me well, for the newspapers adopted me as a regular feature, so

to speak. It has often seemed a great pity to me that a barrister's only means of advertising are common gossip and the daily Press. If legal ethics would merely allow him to leave samples of his work at a solicitor's chambers it would surely be less conspicuous and offensive than the exhibitionism in court which he is permitted to employ and which I am sure he employs much against his will and only to attract the newspaper reporters. Many a young barrister devotes long nights to blushing at his antics of the day. It is true that some barristers are less modest than others, but this very fact proves that some are more modest than others. It is only natural that a man who hears his own voice in court all day must grow weary of its sound; this produces a modesty which may not have existed before.

It was shortly after the great Moon case that I took silk. It will be remembered that I was counsel for Stanislaus Moon, who had been dishonourably discharged from the Army for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. Moon took the matter into the civil courts, where I succeeded in establishing the rule that a court-martial must first prove what a gentleman is and then go on to prove what becomes him. This is more difficult than it may sound to the layman, and the Army surrendered after vainly trying to claim that "an officer and a gentleman" means "an officer or a gentleman."

Another leading case in which I played a part in those days was the Wigglesworth forgery trial. I defended Wigglesworth, who was charged with forging banknotes and uttering them. He pleaded that he could neither read nor write, which would naturally have cleared him of the forgery charge if he had been able to prove it, but I avoided all embarrassment of this kind by placing the onus on the prosecution and demanding proof that he *could* read and write. The trial judge ordered the jury to disregard my argument, but the jury knew better. On the charge of uttering the notes Wigglesworth pleaded lack of *mens rea*, again on the ground of illiteracy. He said he could not tell one banknote from another and could only go by what his friends were willing to divulge. All notes appeared equally pretty to him. The jury found this statement most acceptable and were deeply touched. I still have Wigglesworth's letter of thanks which I persuaded him not to send to the jury.

My appointment to the Bench came as no surprise to me. I accepted with some reluctance. It is commonly

known that a judge makes a great deal less money than a leader of the Bar. Of course the honour counts for something, as do the settled life and easier hours, but the opportunity for making unlimited jokes is vastly overrated, since these jokes are all given away free and not paid for, as are a barrister's little quips. They are included in the judge's salary. It is no wonder that many a judge refrains from joking altogether, as he is fully entitled to do. One can scarcely blame him. Personally I have always tried to introduce a few gags each day to keep up the old tradition, especially when I can find an older barrister who knows the minstrel-show routine and can improvise as Mr. Bones or a Corner-Man.

Perhaps the best exchange of wit I ever heard was one in which I took no part myself, strange though this may seem. The late Mr. Justice Candytuft rebuked Sir Lupus Figg, K.C., for tardiness by reminding him that punctuality is the courtesy of kings. Sir Lupus replied "If I were a king, my lord, I shouldn't turn up here at all, early or late." The judge said "According to the late Senator Long of Louisiana, every man is a king." "Yes, my lord," said Sir Lupus, "and according to the late Robert Louis Stevenson, the world is so full of a number of things I am sure we should all be as happy as kings." "I do not know about the happy business," said the judge, "but the world is certainly full of a lot of stuff. Stevenson was quite right. I was reading only the other day that there are enough insects in the world to pack the English Channel solid if they ever care to try it. And this is only true insects, mind you. Some insects, I understand, are not really insects at all, having too many legs or too few, as the case may be. Have you read any good books lately, Sir Lupus?" "No, my lord," said Sir Lupus, "but I have written several." This sort of talk sets everyone at ease, particularly the prisoner, and must set a wonderful example to the Junior Bar.

In closing, may I give a word of advice to the young barrister or student? A judge does not like to hear that he is only human. You might imagine, then, that he wishes to hear on the contrary that he is inhuman. But this is not always true. It is best to leave the whole question alone.

Three for Luck

"WANTED, a beautiful educated bride of any caste for a young Zamindar, owning two talkies."—*Advt. in Indian Paper.*

Pre-Existence

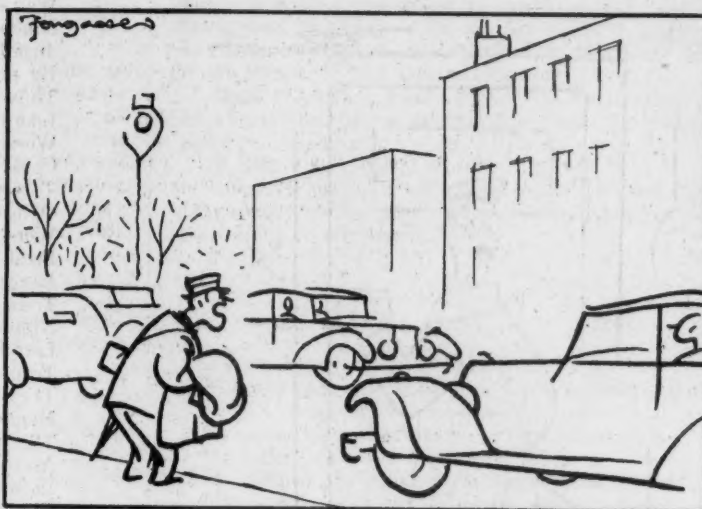
I DO not know exactly when I first became aware of the disturbing sensation. Awareness in relation to sensuous phenomena is normally either positive or negative. In this case the transition was as gradual as an arctic dawn. There was no sudden revelation; no Very-lighting of the intellect. Throughout the day the feeling that I had not been there before grew from vague surmise to unquestioning certainty. It is weird and wonderful, this feeling that we have not been in a place before when all the time we know that if memory serves us aright we have never in all our days so much as set foot in the place. It is as though a deep conviction born of a clear record of our movements in relation to terrestrial objects is supported by visual experience. Not only do we know that we are breaking new ground but that knowledge is impressed upon us by the novelty of the scene.

As I looked about me—at the unfamiliar façades of Cornwallis Road, the bank, the shops, the kiosk—Nature played one of her queerest tricks. "You are a stranger to this town," she seemed to say, "but persons and things that you have never before set eyes on will strike no chord in your memory." Nor did they. I walked. A man approached, drew abreast and without hesitation passed me by. And as he did so I caught a glimpse of his face. A faint nostalgia quickened my pulse and I turned to follow him with my eyes as I muttered: "Surely, I do not know that face?" For a few breathless seconds I toyed with the idea of overtaking him to find the answer to my rhetorical question. Somehow I felt that I had never spoken to the man before—not even been introduced to him somewhere—but the maddening imperfection of the human brain denied me any clear picture of the scene.

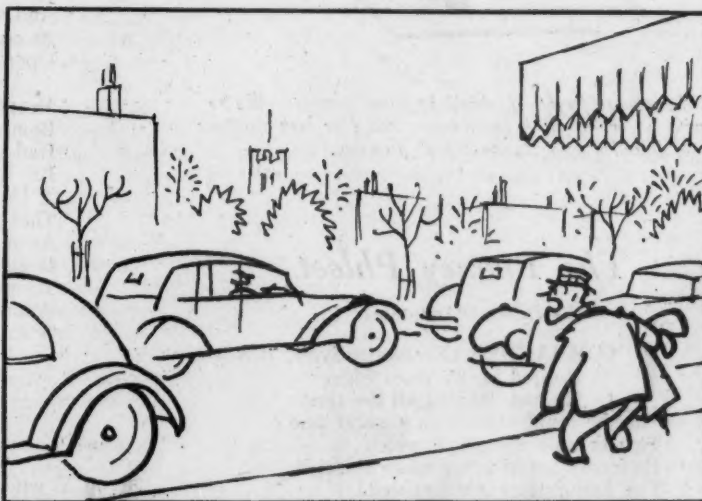
Then as I quivered with rage at my own incompetence I realized what a fool I should look if he turned out to be someone else—someone with whom I was completely unacquainted. In my confusion I allowed the night to swallow him up and now I shall never know whether he was or was not the man I thought he was not.

"Yesterday evening Ribbentrop left Italy and returned to Germany to retort to the Fuehrer."—*Evening Standard*.

The retort courteous, no doubt.



The indignation of the man from the country (where there virtually isn't a car on the road) at seeing the number of cars in town—



is only equalled by the indignation of the man from town (where there virtually isn't a car on the road) at seeing the number of cars in the country.

Berlin and Rzhev

I HOPE Herr Hitler is not dead
(As some people have said)
For he told us if Rzhev gave in
It would be as bad as losing half
Berlin:
So now that the Russians have taken
Rzhev
And thanks to the R.A.F.

Half Berlin is not there,
I think it would be only
fair
If Hitler made another speech
Proving each is equal to
each—
Though of course as I said
The chap may be dead.



"I almost forgot—I shan't be home to-night. We're having a sort of mock guard-room, and I've been selected as a defaulter doing twelve hours' detention."

The Phoney Phleet

X.—H.M.S. "Inflatable"

COMMANDER (E) George Syme, R.N.,
Retired in '23, since when
He had devoted all the time
That he could spare from gin-and-lime
To maritime invention, which
He fondly hoped would make him rich.
The Admiralty knew him well;
He haunted it with plans to sell
Of quite fantastic battle-boats,
Reversing rockets, blast-proof coats,
Synthetic rum, a folding gun:
Their Lordships wished no single one
Of these ideas, and threw him out
Each Thursday forenoon.

I've no doubt
You know that highly moral crack
Of Robert Bruce's big come-back—
Some bug which took it on the chin
Nine times, but at the tenth clocked in,
Thus stimulating Robert B.
To try again. Well, so did he,
Old Syme, and he too found success
At last. Which is how H.M.S.
Inflatable occurred.

This craft
Was simply a gigantic raft,
Nine acres of it, kept afloat,
Just like an airman's folding boat,
By miles of air-filled rubber rings.
Thus lots of very heavy things
Like bulkheads, decks, and armour-plate
Weren't necessary, and their weight
Could be replaced by whacking guns
Torpedo-tubes, and simply tons
Of lesser armament. Her crew
Were lodged in huts, around which grew
Fresh vegetables. Aeroplanes—
Lancasters, Stirlings, Hurricanes—
Took off, or landed on with ease.
Nine acres flat, gigantic seas
Left her unmoved. When U-boats tried
To penetrate her rubber side
They found their fish bounced off again.
Magnetic mines were also vain;
The rubber neutralized their works—
And—
In success, there somehow lurks
The canker of its own decay.
So with *Inflatable*. One day
Syme did some algebra and then
Announced that, filled with hydrogen
Instead of air, he'd make the ship
Mount fifteen more big guns next trip.
He told the ratings not to smoke,
And so some highly zealous bloke
At once knocked out his glowing shag
Upon a well-inflated bag. . . .

Death, flame and famine, storm, disease,
Bombs, taxes, pestilence—all these
Had in their time assailed that port
But had recoiled. Not one had brought
A like disaster in its train.
That harbour never lived again.
An indentation in the coast
Is all that history can boast
To mark the site. And old George Syme
Went sadly back to gin-and-lime.

H. J. Talking

MY wife has become awkward because I have not so far printed specimens of her writing, and as she shows her feelings by putting ashes on her head which blow into the food during meals, I am giving in to her, and here is what her compositions are like.

A CHARMER REVEALS HER SECRET.

Gentle reader, wert thou on thy lawful occasions but recently traversing the adamant without my dwelling, then wouldst thou have espied through traitor casement or half-open door two twinkling eyes, a dimple and a *moue*. Reader, thou shalt be no longer kept in darkness: they were mine.

"Ha!" wouldst thou perchance have exclaimed, leaping back and, for the nonce, unmindful of thine errand. Thy startled question I haste speedily to answer. No result of midnight toil or artificial aids to beauty dost thou see before thee; the face is but the contour of the mind, and

"ITALY," said Metternich, "is a geographical expression."

That was before the day of Garibaldi, maker of modern Italy, lover of Freedom, friend of Britain. Now the wheel has come full circle, and the Italy of Mussolini, enemy of Freedom, foe of Britain, lies in the dust. But what of the day when the strutting braggart struck at beaten France? Do you remember General Wavell's men and their feats of arms? Admiral Cunningham's at Matapan? And the Fleet Air Arm at Taranto?

MUSSOLINI WON'T FORGET!

Many of the heroes of these battles did not return; many are in hospital; the rest are eagerly waiting to engage and defeat a still more evil foe.

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN

to send a contribution to Mr. PUNCH'S COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4? Send now to show your appreciation and gratitude to our magnificent fighting men.

not paint or powder but pure thoughts and good books are the only begetters of the vision that hath confounded thee.

These twinkling orbs owe their dewy lustre to many midnight hours spent over the comedies of Aristophanes. The dimple would not be there were not its owner addicted to the perusal of the sportive fictions of Maria Edgeworth. While the *moue* hath origin in the study of the complete works of Hannah More.

Reader, the mystery is revealed. Go thy way, and if thou wouldst mould a form to rival that which thou hast seen, commence thou rather in the library than the chemist's shop.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN ADAM AND WILLIAM PITT

Adam: Which Pitt are you? I always get muddled.

W. Pitt: The one who wasn't sometimes called Chatham. Would you care for me to explain my Sinking Fund?

Adam: I do not think we have very much in common. My strong points are my sad life and my priority. What are yours?

W. Pitt: I was just about to mention them. I should like to tell you about my Sinking Fund. It has been very highly thought of by historians.

Adam: One of the saddest things about my life was the delving. I was always at it and not being very used to work my skin blistered. I tried all kinds of treatment for my hands but nothing did them much good. Also, my brow sweated a good deal.

W. Pitt: I was very good at figures and I was also eloquent and good at Latin. I was an admirable pupil and I will tell you what I said when I heard about the battle of Austerlitz. I said "Roll up the map of Europe. It will not be wanted for these ten years." That's what I said.

Adam: If you rolled it up for that time it would crack. I think it was a stupid thing to say. Let me tell you about my delving. It gave me backache. I had to call Eve to rub my back and that delayed her spinning. That reminds me of a riddle. Which was the gentleman, Adam or Eve?

W. Pitt: I don't think you have got it quite right. Anyhow, a gentleman is always called Esquire. No one called you Esquire. So the answer is "neither." But I was telling you about my Sinking Fund. I took the National Debt and I said...

Adam: One interesting thing about Eve is that her name is spelled the same backwards and forwards. It often used to amuse us in the old days. I laughed like anything over it and that again interrupted my delving.

W. Pitt: ... The Bank of England ...

Adam: Another joke we had was that owing to my backache I was never Abel to cane Cain. Do you get it?

Able ... Abel ... Cane ... Cain.

W. Pitt: ... 00000 sterling. ...

Adam: Well, don't let me keep you. I have done my best to be entertaining, but some people are incapable of responding to merriment.

W. Pitt: ... % % % ...

A TRIBUTE

by A Poetess

My pig Pettigrew snuffles for truffles
Through park and pleasaunce, through grove and glade.
With a competent air she calmly rootles
By naught perturbed and by naught delayed.
Over the ponds and under the fences
She follows the lead of her well-trained senses.
Marquesses, earls and deans, aghast,
Stare at the lawns where my pet has passed,
Because when she burrows beneath the ground
She throws up a curious, pig-shaped mound.
When she has garnered a sizeable batch
She trots back to me with the succulent catch.
Oh, Pig Pettigrew, dear Pig Pettigrew,
I wish you could snuffle for mushrooms too.

A Beautiful Thought

"There was an excellent attendance at the Social Hour service in the Methodist Church, —, on Sunday evening, when Miss — gave a beautiful interpretation of the solo, 'Beside The Still.'"

Cheshire Paper.



"I suppose you've noticed what they're doing to water — hardly any oxygen in it these days."



"You'd better take all these old war-maps and draw the arrows going the other way round."

Nostalgic Interlude

STUMBLING over my dictation
and at a loss for a phrase
I look out through my office window
which, yesterday, someone came and descrimmed.

There is a gusty wind, I see,
and the balloons are cloud-high,
in cloud one moment and out the next,
like the top of Gable sometimes
when you're in Wastdale after breakfast
lighting your pipe
and wondering about putting your boots on.

"Glass is dropping," says Richard.
"Dropping glass, dropping cloud;
it's no day for the tops."
"Glass may change its mind," says Henry.
"I'm not staying in the valley;
let's risk it";
and we do—
or rather *did*,
though everybody knew, including Henry,
that Richard was always right
and Henry never.

With what fresh weight of authority, Richard,
you will say, "Dropping glass, dropping cloud,"
when, the war over,
you leave the care of the G.P.O.
and come home from the sea.
But, however you say it,
Henry, set free from his *Stalag*,
will shout, "Let's risk it;
I'm not staying cooped up in the valley all day";
and risk it we shall.

"Ahem," says Miss Smith
with the severity of a perfect shorthand-writer
to whom, in office hours,
the sight, through descrimmed windows,
of balloons diving in and out of the clouds
signifies nothing.

So with a sigh
I turn from the Gable
and the cloud-high balloons.
I apologize to Miss Smith
and resume
my inglorious dictation.



A NATION'S GOOD WISHES

"Who shall I say called, Sir?"
"Just say a very grateful admirer."

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, March 2nd.—House of Lords: Of Ships and—Consciences.

House of Commons: A Brief Sitting.

Wednesday, March 3rd.—House of Commons: Grievous News.

Thursday, March 4th.—House of Lords: Lord Beaverbrook (contd.).

Tuesday, March 2nd.—Even when they assembled to-day, Members of the House of Commons were conscious that the shadow of death hovered over their historic meeting-place.

Mr. Speaker EDWARD ALGERNON FITZROY, friend and adviser of all—stormy rebel and correct Minister alike—lay gravely ill. Doctors watched at his side night and day, and all that loving care could do was being done. But we knew that the dignified figure that had awed so many visitors and charmed so many who were privileged to know him would never ascend the steps into the ornate Chair again.

Questions provided but a subdued version of the normal turbulence, and soon the House was dealing with a whole series of estimates.

Half a dozen officers of the United States Army sat in a gallery and listened to the business in frank amazement. They knew, of course, that this is reputed to be a *tight* little island, but, as they listened to the Chairman of Ways and Means, they clearly thought that the "tightness" applied also to its finances.

"The question is," said Major JAMES MILNER, from the Chair, "that a sum not exceeding ten pounds be granted to His Majesty to defray the cost of the Foreign Office for the year 1943."

The officers looked at each other, dazed.

"Ten pounds for the Ministry of Health," went on Major MILNER, "ten pounds for the Army, ten for the Navy, ten for the Royal Air Force."

Nonchalantly the House "Aye-d" the proposals, and the bawbees fairly flowed.

"Gee whiz!" said one of the officers to an attendant. "How much is ten pounds in real money?"

The attendant explained it in dollars—and then had to explain a lot more.

In war-time the House exercises its traditional control over the purse-strings on a "token" basis. The polite request for the sum of ten pounds may produce a long and learned debate on the Army, the Navy, or the R.A.F.—but everybody knows that it is not the ten pounds that is the case of all the bother, but the

fact that probably as many hundred millions of pounds is really being voted. Thus is the principle of control of spending maintained.

One of the U.S. officers, mopping his brow, remarked that it looked like a "five and ten cent war."

This (doubtless necessary) method of paying out in the dark rather limits opportunities for detailed criticism, and the House sat for less than three hours, having in that time also passed a Bill or two.

The Lords were showing at their best as guardians of that most cherished

to evade their civil duties. Lord GLASGOW, apropos of nothing in particular, mentioned that it was "from the Party opposite" that "all cranks and conscientious objectors come."

The term "the Party opposite" traditionally means the official Opposition, which seemed a bit hard, since fifty per cent. of the Opposition Peers then present were in Army uniform and the other fifty per cent. had had distinguished Navy careers.

Colonel Lord NATHAN, just then leading the Opposition, laughed good-naturedly with the rest of the House—except Lord GLASGOW (who did not seem to see the joke) and the Duke of BEDFORD (who apparently does not laugh). Lord PONSONBY having mentioned the case of a man who appeared in Army uniform, explaining that he had not the courage to be a conscientious objector, Lord MUNSTER, for the Government, remarked that everything in official circles was correct, that any statement to the contrary was inaccurate, and that there was no need to do anything about anything.

Then the motion was negatived, not even the Duke voting for it.

Lord WINSTER wanted the Government to build faster (and therefore safer) merchant ships to evade the U-boats. He has an eloquent way of marshalling all sorts of extremely technical facts, and the House listens with attention. But Lord LEATHERS, the War Transport Minister, said what he wanted could not be done, and the matter dropped.

Wednesday, March 3rd.—Mr. McEWEN, a Government Whip, having (in time-honoured phrase) "been asked to reply" for the Board of Trade to a number of queries on the order forbidding the carriage of flowers by train, ran into a bit of heavy fighting. It should be said that he acquitted himself well, especially considering that he is new to the battle inoculation all Ministers undergo.

Most Whips who have the greatness of temporary Ministerial rank thrust upon them frankly dodge all "supplementaries" with the bland (and sometimes meant) assurance that the substance of the question will be "conveyed to my Right Honourable Friend." Pte. JOCK McEWEN, H.G., scorns such get-outs.

He rapped out his answers as to the Front Bench manner born, and even when he announced that action would be taken against anyone "committing an Order against the offence" the House allowed no bitterness to tinge its hearty laughter.

Lady ASTOR, by the way, showed



CONCERNING THE FLEETE

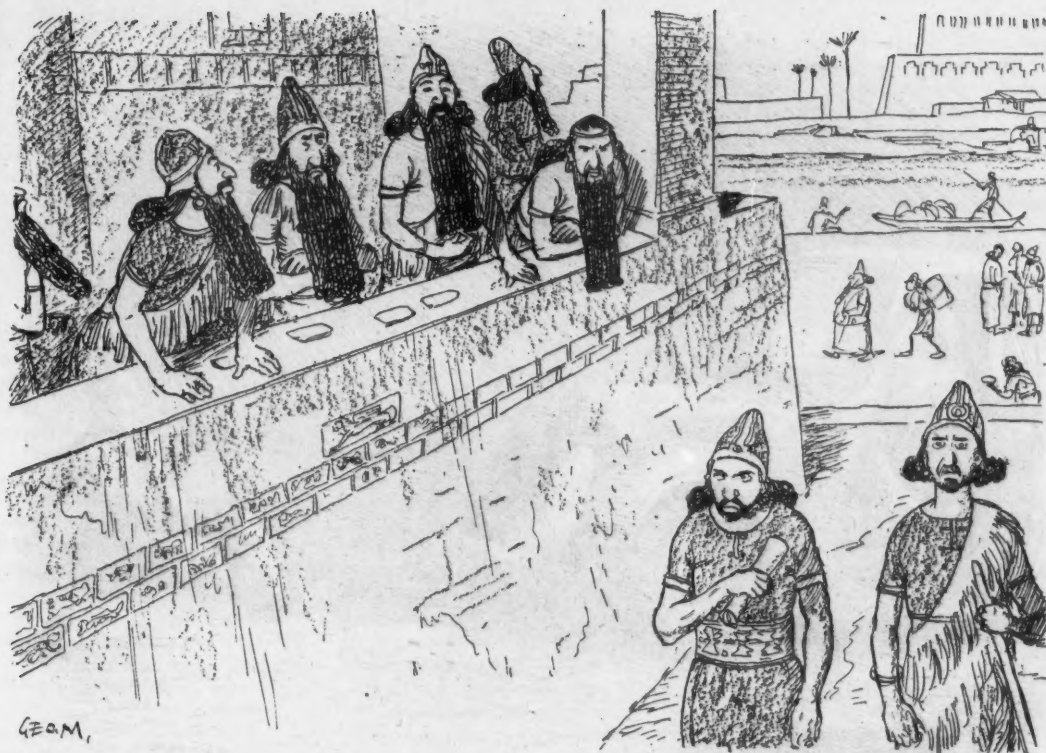
March 3rd, 1943. "Up, and to my office. . . And so to Westminster, where a mighty full House."—From Alexander Pepys's Diary.

of British possessions, free speech. Gaunt, greying, inexpressibly grim, the Duke of BEDFORD stood there to move a motion in favour of the recognition of conscientious objection to fire-watching.

Probably hardly one noble Lord present agreed with a single word of his speech, but he was given a quiet and uninterrupted hearing. The speech lasted for most of an hour, and there was silence the whole time, even when his Grace advocated putting out incendiary fires by a negotiated peace. It was a patently sincere plea for freedom of conscience, and the Duke, sitting alone, gave his critics as silent a hearing as they gave him.

Lord ELIBANK accused the Duke of trying to aid a section of the community

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"Look! Utility beards!"

great interest in the question of carrying flowers by rail, whereat a fellow-Member pointed out that a too-literal application of the rule would mean that a lady with *her* name would have to walk to the Sutton Division of Plymouth every week-end.

As Mr. RUPERT DE LA BERE said (very, very loudly, right in Lady ASTOR's ear): "It is all a question of degree—and the Noble Lady is not *always* right!"

To which her Ladyship, with that assurance that makes her a politician, retorted (at least as loudly): "Question! Question!"

Mr. A. V. ALEXANDER, First Lord of the Admiralty, spoke for an hour and more in praise of the Navy—presenting the Navy Estimates, but told the House little that it did not already know.

Then, drawn of face, Mr. W. J. PUSEY, the Speaker's Train-Bearer, entered abruptly. As he did so, Brigadier CHARLES HOWARD, the Sergeant-at-Arms, rose from his place by the Bar, strode the length of the House and silently removed the gilt

Mace that is the emblem of the Speaker's authority from the King.

A great hush fell on the House. So here was the news all feared! Death had beckoned into the great Division Lobby one who had for so many years played his important part in the life of Parliament. No more would the Chair be taken by Mr. Speaker FITZROY.

Amid the silence, Mr. FREDERIC METCALFE, Clerk-Assistant of the House, rose and announced in low tones that he, "with the deepest sorrow," was to record the death of Mr. Speaker. Without another word, he pointed to Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, Leader of the House, who paid brief tribute to one who had firmly guided their deliberations and had been, at the same time, their dear friend.

Mr. DAI GREENFELL, from the Opposition Front Bench, paid his tribute, Sir PERCY HARRIS, for the Liberals, his, Mr. STANLEY HOLMES, for the Liberal Nationals, his, and Mr. JAMES MAXTON his.

Then, scarcely above a whisper, Mr. METCALFE put the question that the

House should adjourn, and Members trooped sadly out, bowing, as they did so, to the empty Chair.

Thursday, March 4th.—The House of Lords sent to Another Place a message of condolence on the death of the Speaker.

Then Lord BEAVERBROOK moved his weekly motion. This time it was on the Army Co-operation Command of the R.A.F., and was a plea for more dive-bombers. Except for some spectacular dive-bombing by and against his Lordship, the debate produced no tangible results.

Clarification

"In future, as soon as a fire starts, the first duty of the fireguard will be to put it out."—*Daily Mail*.

More Austerity

"Cafton won first prize at a Group Competition for a supper for two persons, not exceeding 1s. in cost, and has made 1,652 lbs. of jam and 60 lbs. of chutney with nothing but oil stoves."

From a Women's Institute Magazine.



"Is that you, John? Good—I was afraid I might miss you in the black-out."

Little Talks

THERE you are! "Vested interests" again! Oh, dear, what's the matter now?

Well, this music case. I see somebody's been asking questions about it.

"This music case"? Oh, you mean the "performing rights" affair?

Yes. It seems some wretched society or company or something has got hold of the copyright in all the popular tunes, and they want to charge the factories for turning on the B.B.C. "Music While You Work" programmes! I never heard such a—

Half a minute. I don't think you've got this quite right. If a worker in one of these factories invents a new and useful device—shall we say a new way of making razors—what does he do with it?

Take out a patent, of course—if somebody doesn't pinch it first.

Right. And that means that for a certain number of years, and subject to certain conditions, he has the sole right of manufacturing that device—anyone else who does so must have a licence and pay him a fee?

Of course. I forget the exact details; but—

So do I. But I know it's rather a complicated and difficult business. So much so that, in fact, if the fellow's got any sense, he won't attempt to do the thing himself. He'll employ an expert—

That's right. A Patent Agent.

And, by the way, this poor man's right, his "sole right to exploit his device" is—stand by for a shock—a "vested interest," is it not?

Oh, nonsense!

I told you it would be a shock. You've become so accustomed to using this expression as a term of

abuse that you can't think of it as anything else. But that's the fact. This sole right or interest is a right or interest fixed, planted, or vested in the ingenious labourer—and no one else.

Strictly, yes—I suppose that's right.

It's about time we were strict with these shop-window phrases. Now let's get back to the composer. The composer invents a new tune, the author a new song or play: and they too, by the Copyright Acts, have a "vested interest" in—

Ah, but I wasn't going for the composer. It's this blessed society, making money out of the—

Try not to leap to erroneous conclusions. This blessed society is simply an association of the authors and composers and, like the Patent Agent, it does the difficult business of watching their interests and collecting their rewards.

Oh, I see. I thought—

The composers can't be standing outside every theatre and dance-hall, listening to see if—

Hear, surely.

True. To hear if their tunes are being played. Before they got together they were robbed right and left. Even now they can't check all the stealing.

Stealing?

Certainly. To bag that invention we were talking about, to infringe the worker's patent, would be deliberate stealing: and nobody would think of doing it. But authors and composers, for some reason, are "fair game"—always have been.

Yes, but steady on! In this particular case—after all, there's a war on—there are all these people making munitions—and "Music While You Work" is intended to help them along. I should have thought they might stretch a point—

And let their music be performed for nothing?

Well, in the circumstances, yes.

Has there been any proposal to waive the fees due to the holders of patents in use in munitions factories?

Not that I know of. No, I suppose not. Are newspapers and cigarettes distributed gratis in the munitions factories?

Probably not.

Very well, then.

Yes, but isn't it the case—I saw it stated somewhere—that the composer is being paid twice?

I saw that extraordinary complaint myself. It reminded me of the Private Member's Bill brought in some years ago—by a Labour Member, surprisingly enough—by which the composer was to be paid only once. After a single payment of 2d.—twopence!—every composition was to be free, whether it was a fox-trot or a three-Act opera.

That was going a bit far, I admit.

"Ignorance, pure ignorance," as Dr. Johnson said.

But isn't it a fact that the B.B.C.—and the performers—were already paying—

Quite wrong. The performers are never charged. The B.B.C. were already paying a certain rate for the use of music "domestically" or privately—in the home. Then when all this mass-music, public music, in the factories began—

But in a factory—it isn't public.

I'm very sorry; but His Majesty's Judges have decided that it is. And I should have thought it was obvious. After all, if you can play music to a thousand people, with a dozen loud-speakers, to improve their output and increase your profits, all the year round, for a single licence-fee of 10s. 6d.,

there's no reason why you shouldn't put another loud-speaker outside and give a public concert all day—to advertise the firm.

That's different.

How?

It wouldn't have been allowed.

It might have been, if the composers hadn't gone to law. Anyhow, for such "public" performances, the society—that is, the composers and authors—proposed a new and, I think, very reasonable rate, based on the amount of music used and the number of "music-users."

I know—a penny a day per man or something.

On the contrary—a penny per year—a penny per year per man for one hour of music per day—three hundred and sixty-five hours of music for each man for a penny. Does that sound excessive?

No, but of course it mounts up.

The minimum fee is one guinea; and if there are more than two hundred and fifty-two workers you pay more pennies. But I shouldn't have thought that a firm employing two hundred and fifty persons could complain of a fee of one guinea for three hundred and sixty-five hours of music.

It doesn't sound a lot, certainly.

It doesn't sound a lot to the composer, I can assure you. It's about one-tenth of a farthing for a performance of one musical piece to an audience of two hundred and fifty—and that has to be sub-divided mostly between author, composer and publisher. It is, as a matter of fact, a generous "wag-gesture" to ask for so little.

Well, anyhow, they ought to be jolly grateful to the wireless.

On the contrary. Before the wireless, people bought "sheet-music" and played it on the piano; and that was the composer's regular income. Now they don't. Moreover, the wireless, though it gives this tune or that a spasm of intense unnatural life, also kills off nearly every tune untimely. In the old days a single successful song could keep a composer alive much longer than it does now. At least, I should think so.

Well, it's nice to know that there's at least one virtuous "vested interest."

Oh, but there are lots. The Post Office Savings Bank is bursting with them. And one reason why I'm keen on the Beveridge Plan is that, when it's in force, vested interests will be universal.

How's that?

Well, in the great man's own words: "My Plan . . . interprets Freedom from Want to mean . . . having as of right one's own income to keep one above the necessity of applying for relief."

"As of right"?

Exactly. Every single soul will have a "vested interest." And perhaps at last the absurd expression will die.

A. P. H.

Impending Apologies

"Religious indifference is the result either of bowing down to the world, or giving way to the flesh and its desires, or following the lead of the Diocese: Mesdames Hall, Rome, Hartley, Watson, Carruthers and Hoults."

Parish Magazine.



"But this time, Sir, I fancy you'll agree we've got something rather different."



"You, Daisy Perkins, will lead the attack, supported by Mrs. Miniver and Vera Lynn."

Letters to a Conscript Father

MY DEAR FATHER,—I'm Duty Junior N.C.O. to-night, so I feel a bit cheesed. I'm in the Orderly Room, which Duty Junior N.C.O.s use for a Duty-room, and because someone once made a complaint about the black-out here about two years ago we're only allowed to have one light on, and that has to be done up in brown paper like a badly-tied parcel. So things are a bit grim, not to say dim.

However, the duty doesn't come round often; and I've two things to be thankful for—one is that it isn't Sunday, when the job is a proper bind, and the other is that I shall be able to catch up on my correspondence. Rather an awful thing has happened to the Staff N.C.O.s here, which I must tell you about.

(The Senior man of the nightly fatigue-party has just been in to ask where there's any coal. As if I knew. I suppose he thinks that because I'm in charge of the building I'm going to run all over the camp getting coal for them to light their darned fires. I admit it's difficult. The coal-shed at the back is two feet deep in very fine coal-dust, rather damp, and they're trying to lay fires with it

ready for the morning; they just pour it into the grates, wait for it to run through into the thing underneath, and then take it out and throw it away. I told him to use his initiative. I hope he's got some, otherwise it will be part of my duty to charge him.)

Well, as I say, we Staff N.C.O.s have had rather a blow. (The Senior man has just come in to say he's found a rough-haired terrier in the Adjutant's office. He was carrying a chair-leg and a small book-case door.)

Well, the "blow" I was telling you about is this. A recent Air Ministry Order . . . (Sorry, but I've just remembered I ought to enter the rough-haired terrier in the Occurrence Book. I suppose one would call a rough-haired terrier in the Adjutant's office an occurrence? I'd better enter it, just to safeguard myself, otherwise, if anything's been chewed up by the terrier I shall be chewed up by the Adjutant.)

Later.

A positive spate of activity. I'd just finished entering the terrier up, with the words "Ejected from Building," in the column headed "Action Taken," when the Duty

Officer rang up to say that the Adjutant wanted his dog taken for a walk every hour. So I had to send one of the fire-picket out to fetch the terrier back. The rotten thing about this job is that nobody ever tells you anything, and you can drop dozens of tabs through absolutely no fault of your own. The fire-picket man has been away an hour already. It's a very dark night and he doesn't know the dog's name. How was I to know it was the Adjutant's dog?

Then the Fatigue Party wanted me to inspect all the rooms so that they could pack up and go, so I had to do that. They weren't very well swept out, either, and the men tried to make the excuse that there weren't any brooms. I gave them a strong talking to, beginning: "You ought to have been an A.C.2 in my time. . . ." I don't know, the men seem such a helpless gang nowadays. We used to bring brooms from the barrack-blocks, but I suppose they couldn't be expected to think of that. It's an offence, of course, so I couldn't tell them to.

Then I've had heaps of other phone calls, all passed on to me by the Duty Senior N.C.O., in building 148. That's all the Duty Senior N.C.O. ever does, and even that he doesn't do himself. He makes one of his fire-picket men sit by the telephone and tell anyone who rings up to try extension 99, which is me. Naturally, if a call does come to me first I tell them to try 71, which is him. So we come out about even, really—it just means that each does the other's work.

Then I wrote up the books, though I've got that incomplete entry about the terrier, which is a nuisance. My telephone-book looks like this at present:—

Time	Origin	Message	Action Taken
1815	Defence Officer	Faulty black-out in East Camp ablutions.	Sent fire-picket man, who reported all in order.
1830	Do.	Do.	Do.
1900	Duty Officer.	Adjutant's dog to be walked hourly.	Dog walked.
1910	Mrs. Chadd.	Will A.C. Chadd let her know for certain if he is going home on 48 hrs. pass?	Sent fire-picket man to tell A.C. Chadd (section or whereabouts unknown).
1945	East Finchley Police Station.	1412729 A.C. Chadd, absentee, surrendered to Police.	Notified guardroom. Sent second fire-picket man to recall first.
2000	Duty Senior N.C.O.	Duty Senior N.C.O. going to supper.	—
2015	Station Commander.	Will S/Ldr. Pope play off the snooker finals on Monday?	Passed to Duty Officer.

So altogether time is passing by without my getting much letter written to you, dad. However, about this Air Ministry Order—(sorry, must interrupt again—janker-wallahs reporting).

Later.

Really, some of these janker-merchants are beyond a joke. As you know, they have to report in full marching order, and I'm supposed to check over their equipment. Well, two of them have just turned up. I was just on the verge of congratulating one of them on having got his pack so beautifully square (always difficult when the stipulated articles are packed) when I happened to tap it and found it made a metallic sort of noise, though muffled. I undid it and found it contained the steel drawer out of his barrack-room locker. The cheek of it! Still, very ingenious, I must say. Now I shall have to charge him, and I've got to think how to word the Charge Sheet. If I get it wrong I shall be charged for not knowing how to charge. I suppose it ought to be, "When on Active Service, whilst undergoing

punishment of Confinement to Camp, having a steel locker drawer in his top pack instead of the articles stipulated in Station Standing Orders." It looks silly in writing, but then charges always do.

I made the other janker-wallah unroll his gas-cape and found he'd got a wallet in it. I'm not sure whether this is an offence or not, and must ring up the Duty Senior N.C.O. when he's back from supper and find out.

It doesn't look as if I'm going to get much letter written, so perhaps I'd better just tell you about this frightful A.M.O., and then pack up.

(The fire-picket goon I sent to fetch the man who had gone to fetch Chadd has brought back the man who was looking for the Adjutant's dog. Why don't they listen to what they're told? Now I've sent them all out to look for the dog again. That means that if there's a fire I shall have to put it out myself.)

This A.M.O. says that all personnel under thirty-five years of age must do half an hour's compulsory P.T. every day. So before we begin the proper day's work we have to go down to the Gym and caper about like erks. It's not good enough. Wasn't so bad this morning, though, as the Out-Training corporal in charge was a friend of Bairstow's. He gave us all some simple breathing exercises in the fencing-room and let us go. Unfortunately we left all the cigarette-ends behind, and I hear he's on a charge now.

Must go to supper.

Your loving Son PETER.

P.S.—This is awful. All the fire-picket men have come back with a big bulldog—a complete stranger. Two of them have been bitten. Now I shall have to write a report. Never be an N.C.O., Dad!

o o

Face Value

SILENT she sat in the vermilion chair,
Her hands lay idle in her lap,
She stared at nothing in a deep dark sorrow
That loved not yesterday nor hoped for joy to-morrow,
But wore the grief of ages like a wrap
Lined with dismay, and pleated with despair.

Her mouth drooped sadly like a faded flower,
White as a lily-bud her cheek;
Held rigid by some secret spell her magic
Eyes looked on a loveless world so starkly tragic,
None, though he be compassionate, dared speak,
Nor yet forgot the terror of that hour.

Oh, heavy heart! Oh, tired, unhappy head!
What melancholy shades were these
That covered you with such a sombre awning?
What were you thinking of? "Me?" she asked, loudly yawning;
"I happened to be thinking about cheese,
If that's of any interest," she said. V. G.

o o

"No power on earth can put back in the bud the silver willow catkins; nothing can shorten and harden the yellow-green catkins of the hazels—make them as they were at winter's beginning. The buds of the trees and bushes have swelled; they can never again get smaller."—Daily Mail.

We must think this over.



"I think—don't you?—that this fire-watching idea should be carried on after the war... in a modified form, of course."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

John Donne

MISS EVELYN HARDY writes with sympathy and imagination about Donne's personal life and historical background (*Donne: A Spirit in Conflict*. CONSTABLE, 10/6). As he was the Dean of St. Paul's when Charles I came to the throne, one tends to forget that he was only seven or eight years younger than Shakespeare, and that his early manhood was passed and his finest poems written in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign. Those years were among the most anxious in our history, for not only was there the permanent menace of a Spanish invasion, but there was also the fear of internal trouble from the Catholics. The old religion was still strong, there were few families which did not include one or more adherents to it, and the result was universal mistrust. "A father," the Spanish Ambassador reported to his master, "dare not trust his own son." Donne's mother was a Catholic, two of his uncles were Jesuits, his early training was Catholic, and though he himself became and remained a Protestant, it is reasonable to assume that the strain and confusion both in his life and writings were largely due to a doubt whether he was following his convictions or his self-interest. For a short time, when he fell in love with Ann More, his future wife, his emotions were harmonized, and his genius reached its highest expression in "The Ecstasy," one of the greatest love-poems in literature. But his life soon resumed its unsettled improvident character, and it was not until

his middle forties, when he was appointed chaplain to James I, that he achieved a secure position. By this time his wife, who bore him twelve children in the sixteen years of their marriage, was worn out, dying at the age of thirty-three, shortly after his appointment. During his last ten years, when he was the Dean of St. Paul's, he became one of the most famous preachers of the day, but his spirit was not illumined by religion as once it had been illumined by love, and his sermons owe such fame as they still possess to their language, not to their matter.

It is a pity that Miss HARDY should have marred her excellent biography with an interpretation of Donne which reflects the strange medley of rationalism and fantastic psychological conjectures prevalent a few years ago in criticism. Writing as a rationalist, she says that Donne lived "apart from the harmonious laws of being"; his maladjustment was largely due to "the pernicious doctrine" of Original Sin; his tragedy was that he was born before the rise of "a dispassionate scientific attitude." Writing in psycho-analytical vein, she suggests that Donne's long-delayed entry into the Church has more in common with Hamlet's projected murder of his uncle-stepfather than may, at first sight, appear.

H. K.

"Twixt Ape and Plato"

An idealist's response to the call of patriotism is, more than most men's, liable to betrayal—it was a great idealist as well as a great patriot who summed up the last war in *Disenchantment*. And it is not only the mechanism of modern warfare that weighs down sensitive youth, but the mechanism of the sapless proletarian world we are so busy cementing around him. The moods of a poet so harassed are reflected in *Laughing Blood* (SIDGWICK AND JACKSON, 4/6), the ardent or scornful lyrics of a young soldier who, prepared to pay a heroic price for the loveliness his boyhood knew as England, discovers that loveliness means little or nothing to the majority of his countrymen. True as this is, you feel that Mr. RICHARD SPENDER will find some tenacious way of perfecting his message and its music as not only the complement but the crown of his military service. Nature—not, as he perceives, an end in herself—will reveal higher allegiances; and the singer who is so enamoured of impetuous cadences that he can extend the filagree of Charles d'Orleans into galloping unrhymed verse, will make even more interesting metrical experiments than the lilting finale of "River." His readers will look forward to the result.

H. P. E.

Believing is Seeing.

MR. ALDOUS HUXLEY's new book, *The Art of Seeing* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 7/-), is a plain account of how after thirty years of increasing blindness he re-educated his sight until "it is about twice as good as it used to be when I wore spectacles." This he did by following the system invented by Dr. Bates, a New York oculist who died in 1931. HUXLEY describes it in detail—passive and active relaxation, breathing, "flashing and swinging," memory-training, avoiding strain and fear. (There is also an interesting chapter on the healing virtue of strong light: though here the case is weakened by depending largely on the experiments of Dr. Luckiesh, who turns out to be Research Director of the General Electric Company of America.) He gives too a logical basis for the system. Sight, he says, is sensing plus selecting plus perceiving: the oculist offers you only a mechanical corrective for the defective eyes: a proper treatment should also consider the perceiving apparatus—the memory and imagination: and that is what Dr. Bates claimed to do. As HUXLEY

says, the point is, not what we think of Dr. Bates and his qualifications, but that his system worked. The book then must be of extraordinary interest to anyone with poor sight. But besides this, you can trace in it one more stage of a passionate thinker between *Crome Yellow* and the heights of mystic contemplation. The parallel is there, for HUXLEY, between these sight-exercises and the discipline of the spirit. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all the rest shall be added!"... if, on the contrary, we persist in behaving as greedy and thoughtless end-gainers, aiming directly at better vision through mechanical devices... we shall end by seeing worse and getting less work done." You hear there the echo of *Ends and Means*, of the tormented *Beavis* in *Eyeless in Giza*—"Become conscious, inhibit, cease to be greedy end-gainer"—you hear even the "passive and active annihilation" of the Grey Eminence (myopic too, and pathetically described in the opening chapter as blessing a peasant who seems "only a dim blur against the sky"). ALDOUS HUXLEY has already gone some way along this road, and there could hardly be an apter pupil for self-healing and self-discipline.

P. M. F.

North and South

"God knows which was right," wrote a Kentucky farmer over the grave of his two sons. One fought for the North, the other for the South; and there were six hundred thousand like them who fell before the War of Secession ended in a Northern victory, slavery abolished and the Union assured. These two last appear desirable enough—even though they might, you feel, have been accomplished without the internecine carnage of the first. But England, having a traditional tenderness for minorities not her own, sympathized largely with the South; and Mr. CARL SANDBURG has held the scales evenly in extracting a vivid chronicle of 1861-1865 from his biography of Abraham Lincoln. *Storm Over the Land* (CAPE, 12/6) is dramatic, poignant and exemplary. It exhibits the pattern of all wars: the malignancy of their hidden causes; the gallantry of their ostensible reasons; the irony that those who fight them are usually the last to have desired them—Grant was no republican, no abolitionist; Lee never kept a slave and fought solely for Virginia. These and humbler men—Southern farmers in butternut jeans with squirrel rifles, Northern prisoners starving in the camps of the starving South—live unforgettably here, as men will, in the almost parochial settings of their outscaled and out-mechanized campaigns.

H. F. E.

Huns and Butter

A crime novel by Mr. BERNARD NEWMAN is like an American farce which has somehow got tangled up with the big stuff of real life. It is as if you went to *Three Men On a Horse* and discovered the three men to be Stavisky, Landru and Dr. Buchman, and the girl who had shown you to your seat Dorothy Thompson in a false nose. He tells *Black Market* (GOLLANCZ, 8/6) in the first person under his own name, and if you look at the acknowledgments to living people who take part in the story you may find yourself in a list which ranges from George Formby to Dr. Goebbels. (He even takes us to lunch at the Savile, which is nice of him, but he should have spelt it properly.) The method is wild, attractive and markedly unscientific. *Papa Pontivy* from Paris is a sagacious old sleuth whose preposterously brilliant intuitions would be unforgivable but for his disarming character. He is the Electric Whiskers of crime literature, and Mr. NEWMAN has given him a first-

rate theme in the idea that the German Intelligence is behind the big black markets because of their power to disintegrate morale. A good point, and well made. I should put this book high on your list. It is entertaining and a change, and I must say it is rather fun to know that whatever turn the story may take your author will see to it that things happen in style and that no facilities, however costly, are withheld.

E. O. D. K.

Unpopular Causes

The Rt. Hon. F. W. PETHICK-LAWRENCE entitles his autobiography *Fate Has Been Kind* (HUTCHINSON, 15/-), but one is left with the impression that she might have been still kinder had not the author elected to put so many obstacles in her path. He started normally enough—Eton, where he became Captain of Oppidans; Trinity, Cambridge, where he graduated as fourth wrangler and won a fellowship. Mathematics had always attracted the future Financial Secretary to the Treasury: Classics he could not abide. But when he went down from Cambridge and took up work at Mansfield House he met his future wife, and that seems to have altered the whole current of his life. He meant to seek a career in politics, but Miss Emmeline Pethick, herself at heart a rebel, could not see herself as a suitable helpmeet for an M.P. belonging to one of the traditional parties. He must investigate things for himself. So, the Boer War being then on, he set out to the Cape to look into that—and soon found himself a Pro-Boer, with Lloyd George, who encouraged him to take over and run the *Echo*. Then came the Votes for Women movement, of which he became an ardent supporter, both he and his wife spending some time in prison for their share in the Militant Suffrage agitation. The opening of the World War of 1914 once more beheld him on the unpopular side. Then, in 1923, he stood as a Labour Candidate for Leicester (West) and defeated our present Prime Minister by over four thousand votes. That started a new section of a busy life, still continuing, in which he has also found time to become something of an expert at billiards and lawn-tennis.

L. W.



MAURICE MCLAUGHLIN

"Well, gentlemen, have we decided who's having the cup with the handle?"



"If it was almost certainly Summerton Road two stations ago, when will it be most likely to be Pilkington Manor?"

Our War-Time Query Corner

Ask Evangeline!

Q. Returning from a conference at a certain north coast resort, in a totally unilluminated railway compartment, I had occasion to lay down my attaché case for a moment while I struck a match to assist one of my fellow travellers to find her bearings. Throughout the rest of the journey I retained the case on my lap, yet when I came to open it next day I found, not, as I had expected, the minutes of our trustees' meeting of the Society for the Preservation of Saxon Remains, but a gutted rabbit and about a pound and a half of black-puddings, accompanied by a card with the words: "Love from Vera." We at once telephoned the lost property department and were told to retain the food in our refrigerator, which we continued to do for ten days, at the end of which time, the owner still having failed to come forward, we assumed we were entitled to the comestibles in question and acted upon this assumption. Imagine

our embarrassment then when, two days later, a person from Pinner (Bagge, by name) arrived to return my case with minutes of trustees' meeting and to claim her property. When it transpired that the eatables were no longer in existence as such, she became first offensive, then frankly abusive, and has continued so. She keeps on saying she has got to have her rabbit. This being impossible, as I do not know how to obtain rabbits, what is my legal position?

(Mr.) ATHELSTAN BOX.

A. As game and offal found in public vehicles in war-time come strictly under the heading of treasure-trove, the only party legally entitled to consume your find was the Crown, so I am afraid you have no choice but to furnish Mrs. Bagge with another rabbit, etc., unless you can get her to take a long view of the affair. After all, what does it matter who eats what, provided everything finds its way into

the national stomach? Otherwise you will have to see what you can do with a ferret and large net receptacle, but I would warn Mrs. Bagge that it may be a question of weeks. Rome was not built in a day.

* * * * *

Q. We were told at a recent lecture to the Women's Institute that if we took example from the birds, this war might be over all the sooner, so my sister and I wondered whether you could tell us what particular aspects of bird life the lecturer had in mind, as we have been life-long members of the King's Crumbrush Small Canary-Keepers' Association, and our niece once earned a good deal of publicity by her imitation of a corncrake at a church social.

MÉLISANDE LENTIL (Miss).

A. I certainly think we would have a very different Britain if more people copied the habits of the tufted pipit, the great bearded shoveller or the

lesser smew, to name only a few of our feathered friends. If we could dock ourselves of some of our sophisticated pleasures and imitate these little creatures (they spend literally hours swinging on telegraph wires, dozing on one leg on old drain-pipes, standing huddled on salvage dumps, etc.), think how the savings would boom! Birds such as the ptarmigan and hen have eschewed the use of water for cleansing purposes and become confirmed ash or dust-bathers. I need hardly point out how a similar policy would enable us to hit the fuel target. The little stint, instead of awaiting the doubtful fruition of crops as we do, eats his seeds neat; a single snippet of eggshell suffices to satisfy the thrifty white-throat; even the least distinguished of our Rhode Island Reds will dig for victory with indefatigable optimism no matter how unpromising the area at his disposal. There is, indeed, some lesson to be learnt from each.

Q. To raise funds for an aircraft-carrier we older employees at Stott and Tittup's (Draperies and General) are getting up a concert party which intends giving performances on three successive Sundays. Nothing very ambitious—a few glees from hardware and printed ninons, elementary conjuring from haberdashery and the cash-desk, and a solo or two with a good moral from bathroom equipment, and so on, but one of my acquaintances whose mother is a town councillor tells me he feels certain the Lord Chamberlain will never let us get away with it. His chief objection seems to be that our window-dresser is planning to wear a false moustache and parti-coloured cap when he sings "On With the Motley." Is it correct that one cannot, by law, wear a false moustache on Sundays? FRED. PINSTRIP (Mr.).

A. Your friend is perfectly right. Once let the public go about in false moustaches on a Sunday and its next demand will be for false noses and wigs, and we all know where that sort of thing ends. It is quite permissible, however, to watch a film in which others wear false moustaches.

Q. A pal of mine has never been the same girl since she was picked for Rubber Dinghy Queen, and has now started playing fast-and-loose with her young man, a reserved slaughterer. While walking out with me the other night to take his mind off things, he all but jumped into an E.W.S. tank, and when I hung on to his arm to stop him, it was enough to break your heart the way he said, "Oh, for the wings,

for the wings of a dove." Is there anything his well-wishers could do for him?

TRIXIE PARKINSON (Miss).

A. Beyond suggesting that you club together and get him a pair, I can only say that his behaviour may have been actuated either by jealousy of the many unknown users of the dinghies which the fingers of his fiancée have helped to manufacture, or by a subconscious desire to soar high in some field other than the abattoir. His tank manoeuvre, coupled with the seemingly irrelevant observation that followed, would appear to mean that he is equally balanced in his predisposition towards the Navy, the R.A.F. and the Royal Observer Corps.

Q. I am sometimes visited by the sudden disturbing sensation that my sergeant-major does not really exist. Is it anything to worry about?

Pte. ESME HIGGS.

A. It may be that the condition arises from a general sense of fusion with the universe, common to sensitive, intellectual young service-men at certain phases of their Army life. You feel you are one with everything about you—the marble-topped counter, the beer-pulls, the last ham-sandwich beneath its cracked glass bell. Your sergeant-major and you are but one identity, he the symbol of plus infinity, you the symbol of minus infinity; both

zero. Some harmless expedient such as the murmuring of slightly derogatory observations in his hearing might make him more real to you, if that is what you want.

Q. One of our members, a Mrs. Shiftshank, raised a rather interesting point the other evening in asking what would be done with spare shells, bombs, etc., after the war. She quoted Prof. Vespasian Sweet—*Nations go to war so that their newly-amassed armaments will not be wasted*. Surely the war will not be prolonged until everything is used up?

PRIOR'S PUSHCART LADIES'

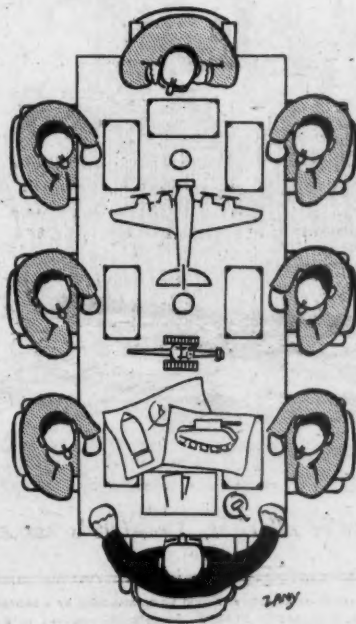
STUDY CIRCLE.

A. Though due economy must be observed, I do not think the Government will let an odd shell or so stand in its way when victory is at hand. As to a post-war use for armaments, I dare say we shall pass on a good many sound ones, at bargain prices, to governments in other hemispheres. The remainder, having had their explosives extracted, will be melted back into their component parts—saucepans, park railings, drawing pins, etc., all combustible material being then handed over to manufacturers of Christmas crackers, as I understand that the child of to-morrow will expect something very different from the uncertain, amateurish noise-producers of pre-war days.

Q. Having always prided ourselves upon an uninterrupted view of the Ouse estuary from our larder window, my husband and I were much distressed when in 1940 poles were inserted all over the beach to stop an invasion. We now realize our selfishness, for last summer when our old clothes-props snapped through, we were able to avail ourselves of a couple of the poles mentioned, situated, like a godsend, not a stone's throw from the tradesman's entrance. In their place we erected, one evening after dusk, two apparently rotting lengths of horse chestnut which we were in the habit of using to poke the compost heap. Now, after two months in town, we find that these discarded branches are putting forth buds. Does not this seem to you a certain sign of victory within the year? Do you think we should draw the Government's attention to the phenomenon? My husband thinks not.

DESIRÉE HOPKINS (Mrs.).

A. It is a pretty thought, but I would hesitate to bring the matter to the notice of anyone in authority, as you lay yourselves open to a charge of unauthorized afforestation.



"And what happens, gentlemen, if people want peace after the war?"



"If it was almost certainly Summerton Road two stations ago, when will it be most likely to be Pilkington Manor?"

Our War-Time Query Corner

Ask Evangeline!

Q. Returning from a conference at a certain north coast resort, in a totally unilluminated railway compartment, I had occasion to lay down my attaché case for a moment while I struck a match to assist one of my fellow travellers to find her bearings. Throughout the rest of the journey I retained the case on my lap, yet when I came to open it next day I found, not, as I had expected, the minutes of our trustees' meeting of the Society for the Preservation of Saxon Remains, but a gutted rabbit and about a pound and a half of black-puddings, accompanied by a card with the words: "Love from Vera." We at once telephoned the lost property department and were told to retain the food in our refrigerator, which we continued to do for ten days, at the end of which time, the owner still having failed to come forward, we assumed we were entitled to the comestibles in question and acted upon this assumption. Imagine

our embarrassment then when, two days later, a person from Pinner (Bagge, by name) arrived to return my case with minutes of trustees' meeting and to claim her property. When it transpired that the eatables were no longer in existence as such, she became first offensive, then frankly abusive, and has continued so. She keeps on saying she has got to have her rabbit. This being impossible, as I do not know how to obtain rabbits, what is my legal position?

(Mr.) ATHELSTAN BOX.

A. As game and offal found in public vehicles in war-time come strictly under the heading of treasure-trove, the only party legally entitled to consume your find was the Crown, so I am afraid you have no choice but to furnish Mrs. Bagge with another rabbit, etc., unless you can get her to take a long view of the affair. After all, what does it matter who eats what, provided everything finds its way into

the national stomach? Otherwise you will have to see what you can do with a ferret and large net receptacle, but I would warn Mrs. Bagge that it may be a question of weeks. Rome was not built in a day.

* * * * *

Q. We were told at a recent lecture to the Women's Institute that if we took example from the birds, this war might be over all the sooner, so my sister and I wondered whether you could tell us what particular aspects of bird life the lecturer had in mind, as we have been life-long members of the King's Crumbrush Small Canary-Keepers' Association, and our niece once earned a good deal of publicity by her imitation of a cornerake at a church social.

MÉLISANDE LENTIL (Miss).

A. I certainly think we would have a very different Britain if more people copied the habits of the tufted pipit, the great bearded shoveller or the

lesser smew, to name only a few of our feathered friends. If we could dock ourselves of some of our sophisticated pleasures and imitate these little creatures (they spend literally hours swinging on telegraph wires, dozing on one leg on old drain-pipes, standing huddled on salvage dumps, etc.), think how the savings would boom! Birds such as the ptarmigan and hen have eschewed the use of water for cleansing purposes and become confirmed ash or dust-bathers. I need hardly point out how a similar policy would enable us to hit the fuel target. The little stint, instead of awaiting the doubtful fruition of crops as we do, eats his seeds neat; a single snippet of eggshell suffices to satisfy the thrifty white-throat; even the least distinguished of our Rhode Island Reds will dig for victory with indefatigable optimism no matter how unpromising the area at his disposal. There is, indeed, some lesson to be learnt from each.

* * * * *

Q. To raise funds for an aircraft-carrier we older employees at Stott and Tittup's (Drapery and General) are getting up a concert party which intends giving performances on three successive Sundays. Nothing very ambitious—a few glees from hardware and printed ninons, elementary conjuring from haberdashery and the cash-desk, and a solo or two with a good moral from bathroom equipment, and so on, but one of my acquaintances whose mother is a town councillor tells me he feels certain the Lord Chamberlain will never let us get away with it. His chief objection seems to be that our window-dresser is planning to wear a false moustache and parti-coloured cap when he sings "On With the Motley." Is it correct that one cannot, by law, wear a false moustache on Sundays? FRED. PINSTRIP (Mr.).

A. Your friend is perfectly right. Once let the public go about in false moustaches on a Sunday and its next demand will be for false noses and wigs, and we all know where that sort of thing ends. It is quite permissible, however, to watch a film in which others wear false moustaches.

* * * * *

Q. A pal of mine has never been the same girl since she was picked for Rubber Dinghy Queen, and has now started playing fast-and-loose with her young man, a reserved slaughterer. While walking out with me the other night to take his mind off things, he all but jumped into an E.W.S. tank, and when I hung on to his arm to stop him, it was enough to break your heart the way he said, "Oh, for the wings,

for the wings of a dove." Is there anything his well-wishers could do for him?

TRIXIE PARKINSON (Miss).

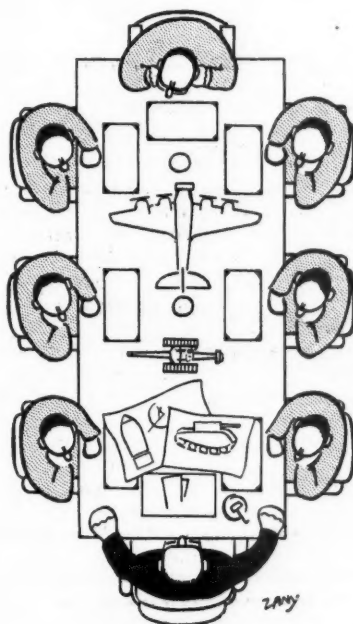
A. Beyond suggesting that you club together and get him a pair, I can only say that his behaviour may have been actuated either by jealousy of the many unknown users of the dinghies which the fingers of his fiancée have helped to manufacture, or by a sub-conscious desire to soar high in some field other than the abattoir. His tank manoeuvre, coupled with the seemingly irrelevant observation that followed, would appear to mean that he is equally balanced in his predisposition towards the Navy, the R.A.F. and the Royal Observer Corps.

* * * * *

Q. I am sometimes visited by the sudden disturbing sensation that my sergeant-major does not really exist. Is it anything to worry about?

Pte. ESME HIGGS.

A. It may be that the condition arises from a general sense of fusion with the universe, common to sensitive, intellectual young service-men at certain phases of their Army life. You feel you are one with everything about you—the marble-topped counter, the beer-pulls, the last ham-sandwich beneath its cracked glass bell. Your sergeant-major and you are but one identity, he the symbol of plus infinity, you the symbol of minus infinity; both



"And what happens, gentlemen, if people want peace after the war?"

zero. Some harmless expedient such as the murmuring of slightly derogatory observations in his hearing might make him more real to you, if that is what you want.

* * * * *

Q. One of our members, a Mrs. Shiftshank, raised a rather interesting point the other evening in asking what would be done with spare shells, bombs, etc., after the war. She quoted Prof. Vespasian Sweet—*Nations go to war so that their newly-amassed armaments will not be wasted*. Surely the war will not be prolonged until everything is used up?

PRIOR'S PUSHCART LADIES' STUDY CIRCLE.

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Question of Size

THE train started with a great jerk.

The child said to its mother, "Mummy, have we run into another train?" It said this very hopefully.

The mother said, "No, darling."

Unbeaten, the child said, "Perhaps it's only a teeny, weeny little train we've run into."

The American soldier in the corner said he couldn't kinda get used to English trains.

The child said, "Mummy, why does that soldier talk so funny?"

The mother said, "Hush, dear."

The American soldier, who was a very good-natured American soldier, laughed and guessed it was on account of his being American.

"What's Merrican?" the child asked.

"Someone who comes from America," its mother told it.

"What's Merrica?" the child wanted to know.

Various attempts were made to explain America, but the child could not get the hang of it at all.

"Does God live in Merrica, Mummy?" the child wanted to know.

No, they explained; but Mr. Roosevelt did.

The child showed clearly that it didn't think much of that for an explanation.

The lady in the corner said that it was a sweet child, obviously intelligent and no doubt very tired.

The child said, "Mummy, why does she talk so funny?"

The mother said, "Hush, dear. I expect she thinks that *you* talk funnily."

The child rocked with laughter at the idea.

The lady, who was a very good-

natured lady, explained that she came from South Africa.

The child asked if God lived in South Africa.

No, they explained; but General Smuts did.

The child asked, "Is Merrica bigger'n South Africa?"

The mother said it was.

"Lots and lots bigger?"

The mother said, "Yes," and hoped the South African lady would not mind.

A pause.

The child said, "Is Mr. Roosevelt lots and lots bigger than General Smuts?"

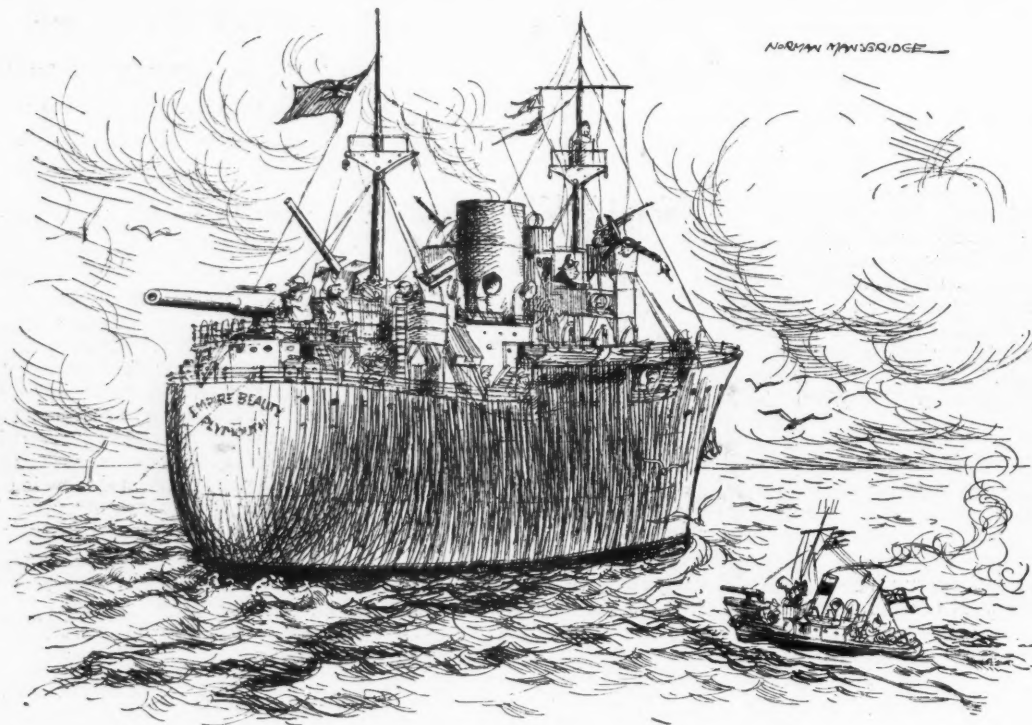
The mother said she did not know.

"Is he lots and lots *smaller*, then?" the child wanted to know.

The mother was uncertain.

The child thought.

"Perhaps," it suggested, "they are both *exactly* the same size."



"Now we're all right, Sir—here's our escort."

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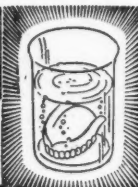
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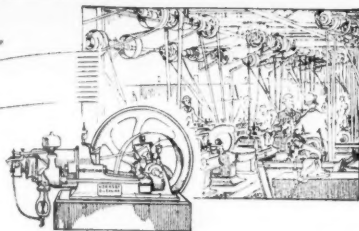
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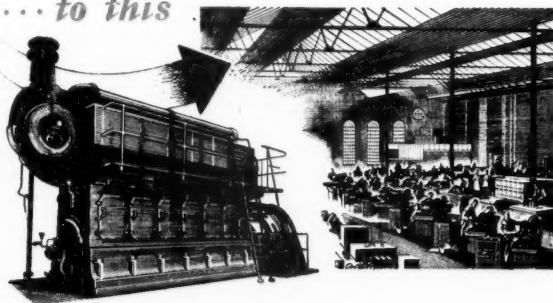
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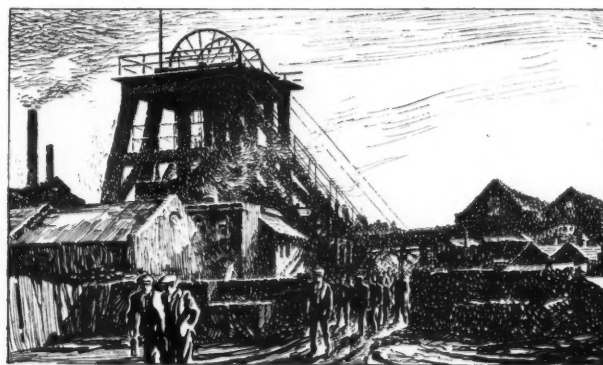
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